

(19)



Europäisches Patentamt

European Patent Office

Office européen des brevets



(11)

EP 1 113 300 A1

(12)

EUROPEAN PATENT APPLICATION

published in accordance with Art. 158(3) EPC

(43) Date of publication:

04.07.2001 Bulletin 2001/27

(51) Int Cl.7: **G02B 6/42**(21) Application number: **00946380.3**

(86) International application number:

PCT/JP00/04813(22) Date of filing: **18.07.2000**

(87) International publication number:

WO 01/06292 (25.01.2001 Gazette 2001/04)

(84) Designated Contracting States:

**AT BE CH CY DE DK ES FI FR GB GR IE IT LI LU
MC NL PT SE**(30) Priority: **19.07.1999 JP 20484999**(71) Applicant: **The Furukawa Electric Co., Ltd.
Tokyo 100-8322 (JP)**

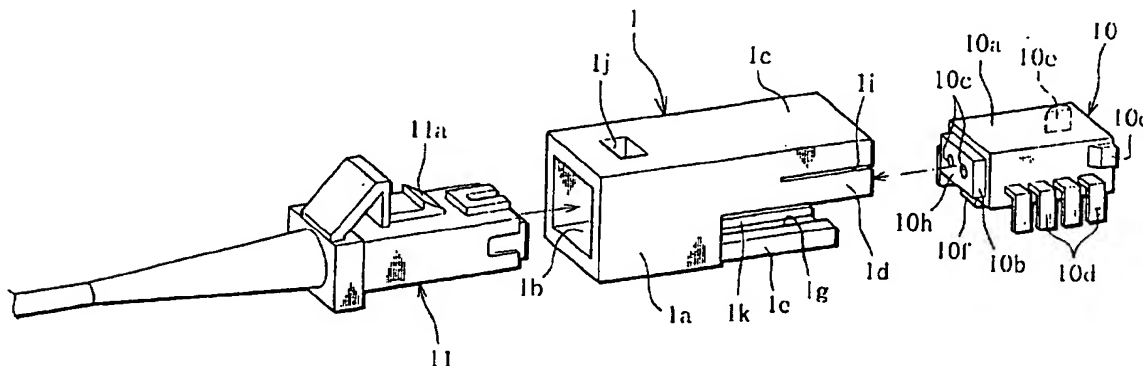
(72) Inventors:

- **MINAMINO, Masayuki**
The Furukawa Electr. Co., Ltd.
Chiyoda-ku, Tokyo 100-8322 (JP)

• **IWASE, Masayuki**The Furukawa Electric Co., Ltd.
Chiyoda-ku, Tokyo 100-8322 (JP)• **YAMADA, Hiroyuki**The Furukawa Electric Co., Ltd.
Chiyoda-ku, Tokyo 100-8322 (JP)(74) Representative: **Modiano, Guido, Dr.-Ing. et al**
Modiano, Josif, Pisanty & Staub,
Baaderstrasse 3
80469 München (DE)**(54) RECEPTACLE MODULE**

(57) A receptacle module comprises an optical module having a photoelectric converting capability and a receptacle to be used for connecting the optical module

to an optical connector. The receptacle has a positioning portion for positioning the optical module and an engagement portion for detachably holding the optical module by engagement.

FIG. 1**EP 1 113 300 A1**

Description

TECHNICAL FIELD

[0001] The present invention relates to a receptacle module comprising an optical module having a photoelectric converting capability and a receptacle which is used for connecting the optical module to an optical connector.

BACKGROUND ART

[0002] Conventional connection of an optical module and an optical connector in a detachable manner is accomplished by employing a so-called receptacle module structure which has a receptacle integrally provided on an optical module.

[0003] From the viewpoint of the down-sizing demand, an optical module which is the integration of various kinds of optical components has been used in optical communications, but simple connection to the optical connector has been studied.

[0004] However, an optical module designed to be integral with the receptacle suffers its large size on a production line on which it is mounted on a printed wiring board, and a complicated structure on the receptacle portion to which the optical connector is to be connected. This makes the optical module hard to process.

[0005] As a solution, a receptacle which is manufactured independently and separately from an optical module may be securely adhered to the optical module. This scheme however requires a step of curing an adhesive, thus disabling prompt use of the final product.

[0006] It is an object of the present invention to provide a compact receptacle module with a simple structure, which has an optical module and a receptacle, ensures easy detachable connection between them, and permits either one of the optical module and receptacle, whichever fails, to be replaced with a new one.

DISCLOSURE OF THE INVENTION

[0007] To achieve above object, according to this invention, there is provided a receptacle module comprising an optical module having a photoelectric converting capability and a receptacle to be used for connecting the optical module to an optical connector, the receptacle having a positioning portion for positioning the optical module and an engagement portion for detachably holding the optical module by engagement.

[0008] The receptacle module of this invention is used at the time of connecting an optical connector and an optical module in a detachable manner, ensures easy detachable connection therebetween, permits either one of the optical module and receptacle, whichever fails, to be replaced with a new one, and has a compact and simple structure.

[0009] It is preferable that the positioning portion has

a first positioning member for positioning the optical module, the first positioning member extending from both widthwise-directional sides of the receptacle along a direction of connection between the optical connector and the optical module. This structure is preferable in achieving the above object because the optical module of the receptacle module is positioned by the first positioning member with respect to the widthwise direction of the receptacle.

[0010] It is preferable that the first positioning member is provided as part of a side portion of the receptacle and is partly separated from a main body of the receptacle by a slit provided along an attaching and detaching direction of the optical module. This structure is advantageous in achieving the above object because the slit makes the first positioning member of the receptacle module easier to be opened or closed in the widthwise direction.

[0011] It is further preferable that the engagement portion is formed on the first positioning member. This structure is advantageous in achieving the above object as the receptacle module can simultaneously accomplish the positioning of the optical module by the first positioning member and the engagement of the optical module by the engagement portion.

[0012] It is preferable that the positioning portion has a second positioning member extending from a bottom portion of a main body of the receptacle and the optical module is positioned between the first and second positioning members. As this receptacle module allows the optical module to be positioned below the receptacle in the height direction by the second positioning member, this structure is advantageous in achieving the above object.

[0013] It is preferable that the second positioning member is formed narrower than a width of the receptacle. This structure can make the receptacle module more compact and is thus preferable in the sense of achieving the above object.

[0014] It is preferable that the positioning portion is provided with guide means along an attaching and detaching direction of the optical module and the optical module is provided with to-be-guided means to be fitted in the guide means. This structure of the receptacle module can permit the optical module to be smoothly guided in the lengthwise direction by the fitting of the guide means and the to-be-guided means, and is therefore preferable in achieving the aforementioned object.

[0015] It is preferable that the optical module is provided with an engagement-portion mating portion for engaging with the engagement portion. With this structure, the strength of engagement between the receptacle and the optical module of the receptacle module is improved by the engagement-portion mating portion. This structure is therefore advantageous in achieving the aforementioned object.

[0016] It is preferable that the receptacle module further includes a cover to be engaged with the receptacle,

which cover comprises side plates for covering the first positioning member from both widthwise-directional sides, a top plate for covering a top portion of the first positioning member, and a rear plate for covering a distal end portion of the first positioning member, and with the optical module held between the first and second positioning members, the first positioning member and the optical module are covered with the cover, and with the cover engaged with the receptacle, the optical module is held positioned with respect to the receptacle.

[0017] As this structure of the receptacle module shields the optical module into the receptacle using the cover, the optical module can be held more surely than the receptacle. This is advantageous in achieving the aforementioned object.

[0018] It is preferable that the side plates have slits formed in a height direction. With this structure, the slits permit the side plates of the cover to be easily opened and closed in the widthwise direction. This makes it easier to remove the cover from the main body of the receptacle, which is preferable in achieving the aforementioned object.

[0019] It is preferable that a heat discharging portion of a thermal conductive material is provided on at least part of the cover and the heat discharging portion and the optical module are secured in contact with each other. This structure can permit the receptacle module to efficiently discharge the heat, generated in the optical module, outside. This feature is preferable in maintaining the performance of the optical module.

[0020] It is preferable that the optical module has a protruding portion having an end face to be optically coupled to the optical connector, and the receptacle has a positioning member, as the positioning portion, for positioning the optical module and an inserting portion formed inside, which is to be fitted over the protruding portion, and the receptacle and the optical module are positioned by the positioning member and the optical module and are positioned more accurately by the protruding portion fitted into the inserting portion. This structure of the receptacle module can allow the optical module to be positioned precisely with respect to the receptacle. At the time the optical module is connected to the optical connector, therefore, high-precision optical coupling can be realized, thus contributing to an improvement of the performance.

BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF THE DRAWINGS

[0021]

Figure 1 is a perspective view of a receptacle module according to a first embodiment of this invention, illustrating how to insert an optical module from the receptacle side;

Figure 2 is a perspective view of the receptacle module in Figure 1 as seen from the optical module side;

Figure 3A is a perspective view of the receptacle module in Figure 1 in which the optical module is fitted, and Figure 3B is a bottom view of the receptacle module;

Figure 4 is a perspective view of a receptacle module according to a second embodiment of this invention, illustrating how to attach an optical module and a cover from the receptacle side;

Figure 5 is a perspective view of the receptacle module in Figure 4 as seen from the optical module side;

Figure 6 is a perspective view showing a cover, bottom-side up, which is used in the receptacle module in Figure 4;

Figure 7A is a perspective view of the receptacle module in Figure 4 which has the optical module and the cover attached together, and Figure 7B is a bottom view of the receptacle module;

Figure 8 is a partly cross-sectional view of the receptacle module showing only the main body of the receptacle and the cover in cross section along the line C1-C1 in Figure 7B;

Figure 9 is a perspective view of a receptacle module according to a third embodiment of this invention, illustrating how to insert an optical module from the receptacle side;

Figure 10 is a bottom view of the receptacle module in Figure 9 in which the optical module is fitted; and

Figure 11A is an exploded perspective view for explaining an example of mounting a receptacle module using the receptacle in Figure 4 on a printed wiring board, and Figure 11B is a perspective view showing the receptacle module mounted on the printed wiring board.

BEST MODE FOR CARRYING OUT THE INVENTION

[0022] Preferred embodiment of the present invention will now be described in detail referring to Figures 1 to 11B.

[0023] A receptacle module according to the first embodiment has a receptacle 1 and an optical module 10 shown in Figures 1 and 2.

[0024] The receptacle 1, which is formed of a synthetic resin such as PPS (polyphenylene sulfide) by molding, is used to connect the optical module 10 to an optical connector 11 as shown in Figure 1. As shown in Figures 1 and 2, the receptacle 1 has an inserting portion 1b formed in the center of a main body 1a which is formed into a rectangular cylindrical shape by molding. The optical connector 11 is to be fitted into this inserting portion 1b. A protruding portion 10b of the optical module 10, which will be discussed later, is to be fitted into the opposite side of the inserting portion 1b to the side where the optical connector 11 is to be fitted. The receptacle 1 has a top plate 1c, side guides 1d and a bottom guide 1e provided on the main body 1a integrally along the direction of connection between the optical connector

tor 11 and the optical module 10, i.e., along the lengthwise direction. The top plate 1c extends from the top portion of the main body 1a. The side guides 1d extend from the two widthwise sides of the main body 1a. The bottom guide 1e extends from the bottom portion of the main body 1a. The top plate 1c, the side guides 1d and the bottom guide 1e form an inserting portion 1k which is the space where the optical module 10 is to be inserted. The optical connector 11 and the optical module 10 are accurately positioned as they are respectively inserted into the inserting portions 1b and 1k.

[0025] The top plate 1c, the side guides 1d and the bottom guide 1e guide, position and hold the optical module 10 at the time the optical module 10 is attached to the receptacle 1. Each side guide 1d is provided as part of the associated side of the main body 1a and serves as a first positioning member. Each side guide 1d has a slit 1i formed therein along the direction of the connection of the optical module 10. This slit 1i separates part of the associated side guide 1d from the top plate 1c, providing a certain degree of freedom in the fitting width for the optical module 10 which is defined by both side guides 1d. Each side guide 1d has a recessed engagement portion 1f formed in the inner distal end portion. This engagement portion 1f engages with an associated projection 10e (which will be discussed later) formed on the optical module 10. As shown in Figures 1 and 2, the bottom guide 1e has a recess 1g formed in the top center portion along the lengthwise direction. This recess 1g serves as a second positioning member. The bottom guide 1e is formed narrower than the main body 1a so that at the time the optical module 10 is attached or detached, leads 10d protruding on both widthwise sides of the optical module 10 do not touch the bottom guide 1e. The receptacle 1 has an engagement hole 1j formed in the top of the main body 1a where a projection 11a of the optical connector 11, which will be discussed later, is engaged.

[0026] The optical module 10, which has a photoelectric converting capability, has a main body 10a made of plastic such as epoxy resin, a protruding portion 10b protruding from the distal end which is to be fitted in the receptacle 1, and two pin holes 10c formed in an optical coupling end face 10h of the front end face. The pin holes 10c are located on both widthwise sides of the protruding portion 10b. The protruding portion 10b has four optical fibers (not shown) exposed on the optical coupling end face 10h between the two pin holes 10c. The optical coupling end face 10h faces the end face of the optical connector 11 when the optical module 10 and the optical connector 11 are connected together via the receptacle 1. The main body 10a of the optical module 10 accommodates an optical part, such as a laser diode (LD) or photodiode (PD), which outputs an optical signal to the optical fibers, with the leads 10d extending from the sides of the main body 10a. The leads 10d are arranged at such positions that do not interfere with the side guides 1d and the bottom guide 1e when the main

body 10a is fitted in the space formed by the top plate 1c, the side guides 1d and the bottom guide 1e.

[0027] The optical module 10 is provided with the projection 10e formed on either side of the main body 10a near a rear end face 10g thereof and a protruding portion 10f formed on the bottom center of the main body 10a in the lengthwise direction. Each projection 10e serves as an engagement-portion mating portion and the protruding portion 10f is to be fitted in the recess 1g of the receptacle 1.

[0028] The optical connector 11 is so designed as to be connected to the optical module 10 when fitted into the inserting portion 1b of the receptacle 1 as shown in Figure 1, and have, for example, an MT (Mechanically Transferable) connector or the like having four optical fibers retained in the housing. Provided on the top surface of the optical connector 11 is the aforementioned projection 11a which engages with the engagement hole 1j of the receptacle 1.

[0029] The receptacle module which has the above-described structure is assembled by engaging the optical module 10 with the receptacle 1 in a detachable manner as follows.

[0030] First, as shown in Figures 1 and 2, the optical module 10 is placed facing the receptacle 1 and its main body 10a is inserted into the space formed by the top plate 1c, the side guides 1d and the bottom guide 1e of the receptacle 1. This causes the optical module 10 to be inserted into the inserting portion 1b formed by the top plate 1c, the side guides 1d and the bottom guide 1e in contact with those components of the receptacle 1 while being guided and positioned.

[0031] As the protruding portion 10f is fitted in the recess 1g formed lengthwise in the bottom guide 1e at this time, the optical module 10 is smoothly inserted into the receptacle 1.

[0032] When the optical module 10 is inserted into the receptacle 1 to the end position, the protruding portion 10b is fitted in the inserting portion 1b and positioned and the projections 10e engage with the associated engagement portions 1f on the side guides 1d. This completes the assembly of the receptacle module. In the assembled receptacle module, therefore, the receptacle 1 can permit the optical module 10 to be positioned in the space formed by the top plate 1c, the side guides 1d and the bottom guide 1e and engaged and held there in a detachable manner, as shown in Figures 3A and 3B.

[0033] As the projections 10e of the optical module 10 on the receptacle side are tapered as shown in Figure 1, the projections 10e smoothly engage with the associated engagement portions 1f at this time. The use of the projections 10e which are so shaped as to match with the engagement portions 1f can enhance the strength of engagement of the optical module 10 with the receptacle 1, thus making the optical module 10 hard to be disengaged from the receptacle 1.

[0034] Roughly speaking, the positioning of the receptacle 1 and the optical module 10 after assembling

the receptacle module in the above-described manner is determined by the positional relationship between the top plate 1c, the side guides 1d and the bottom guide 1e and the main body 10a in an abutting state. More specifically, the positioning is determined by the positional relationship between the protruding portion 10b and the inserting portion 1b in which the protruding portion 10b is fitted.

[0035] When the optical connector 11 is connected to the optical module 10 via the receptacle 1, the receptacle module of this invention can ensure optical coupling with excellent optical characteristics, such as the inserting characteristic.

[0036] According to the receptacle module of this invention, one can easily detach the optical module 10 from the receptacle 1 by pulling the optical module 10 through the reverse steps to the above-described assembling steps while widening the two side guides 1d in the widthwise direction by holding the receptacle 1.

[0037] As apparent from the above, the receptacle 1 of the receptacle module of this embodiment is small, is simple in structure and is easily attachable to and detachable from the optical module 10.

[0038] A receptacle module according to the second embodiment will be discussed below. This receptacle module has a receptacle 5 and an optical module 10 shown in Figures 4 to 7B. This receptacle 5 has a cover 6.

[0039] The optical module and optical connector that are to be inserted into the receptacle 5 have the same structures as the optical module 10 and the optical connector 11 of the first embodiment except that the optical module 10 of the second embodiment does not have the projections 10e provided in the first embodiment. To avoid the redundant description, therefore, same reference numerals as used to denote the components of the optical module 10 and the optical connector 11 of the first embodiment are also given to the corresponding components of the second embodiment in the following description and the associated drawings.

[0040] The receptacle 5, which is formed of synthetic resin such as PPS, has an inserting portion 5b formed in the center of a main body 5a which is formed into a rectangular cylindrical shape by molding as shown in Figure 4. The optical connector 11 is to be fitted into this inserting portion 5b. The receptacle 5 has an opening 5j (see Figures 5 and 8) formed in the opposite side to the inserting portion 5b where the optical module 10 is to be inserted. A protruding portion 10b of the optical module 10 is to be fitted into this opening 5j. The receptacle 5 has side guides 5c and a bottom guide 5d provided on the main body 5a integrally along the direction of connection between the optical connector 11 and the optical module 10, i.e., along the lengthwise direction. The side guides 5c extend from the two widthwise sides of the main body 5a. The bottom guide 5d extends from the bottom portion of the main body 5a. Each side guide 5c, which serves as a first positioning member, has a

recess 5e formed in approximately the lower center portion. This recess 5e is to be engaged with an associated projection 6e of the cover 6, which will be discussed later. As shown in Figures 4 and 5, a recess 5f, which serves as a second positioning member, is formed in the top center portion of the bottom guide 5d along the lengthwise direction. The bottom guide 5d is formed narrower than the main body 5a of the receptacle 5 so that at the time the optical module 10 is attached or detached, leads 10d protruding on both widthwise sides of the optical module 10 do not touch the bottom guide 5d. As shown in Figure 4, the side guides 5c and the bottom guide 5d form an inserting portion 5h which is the space where the optical module 10 is to be inserted. The side guides 5c and the bottom guide 5d together with the cover 6 hold the optical module 10 inserted into the inserting portion 5h. The optical connector 11 and the optical module 10 are accurately positioned as they are respectively inserted into the inserting portions 5b and 5h. The receptacle 5 has an engagement hole 5g formed in the top of the main body 5a where a projection 11a of the optical connector 11 is engaged.

[0041] The cover 6 has a top plate 6a, two side plates 6b and a rear plate 6c, as shown in Figures 4 to 6. Each side plate 6b has a slit 6d cut upward (in the direction perpendicular to the surface of the top plate 6a) from the bottom end and a projection 6e formed inside. While the cover 6 is formed of a synthetic resin having a high moldability or metal, it is particularly formed of a material having a high thermal conductivity, such as copper, aluminum, copper alloy or aluminum alloy, in this example.

[0042] The receptacle module which has the above-described structure is assembled by engaging the optical module 10 with the receptacle 5 in a detachable manner as follows.

[0043] First, as shown in Figures 4 and 5, the optical module 10 is placed facing the receptacle 5 and its main body 10a is inserted into the space formed by the side guides 5c and the bottom guide 5d of the receptacle 5. This causes the optical module 10 to be inserted into the space formed by the side guides 5c and the bottom guide 5d in contact with those components of the receptacle 5 while being guided and positioned.

[0044] As the protruding portion 10f is fitted in the recess 5f formed lengthwise in the bottom guide 5d at this time, the optical module 10 is smoothly inserted into the receptacle 5.

[0045] When the optical module 10 is inserted into the receptacle 5 to the end position, the protruding portion 10b is fitted in the opening 5j and positioned there.

[0046] Next, as shown in Figures 4 and 5, the cover 6 is placed over the side guides 5c and the optical module 10 from above, the projections 6e provided on the side plates 6b are engaged with the respective recesses 5e of the side guides 5c, thus completing the assembling of the receptacle module. With the receptacle module assembled, the top plate 6a covers the side guides 5c and the top of the optical module 10 and contacts the

optical module 10, as shown in Figures 7A and 7B. The side plates 6b cover the side guides 5c and the optical module 10, held between the side guides 5c, from both widthwise sides.

[0047] As shown in Figure 8, the rear plate 6c of the cover 6 covers the distal end portions of the side guides 5c and the rear end face 10g of the optical module 10 and presses the rear end face 10g in the inserting direction of the receptacle 5. As a result, the receptacle 5 can hold the optical module 10 inserted in the space between the side guides 5c, the bottom guide 5d and the cover 6, as shown in Figures 7A, 7B and 8, so that the entire optical module 10 can securely be positioned to the receptacle 5. What is more, as the rear plate 6c of the cover 6 presses the rear end face 10g of the optical module 10, the cover 6 can permit the protruding portion 10b of the optical module 10 to be accurately fitted in the inserting portion 5b of the receptacle 5 at a predetermined position as per the first embodiment.

[0048] Figure 7B does not show the cover 6 and Figure 8 shows only the receptacle 5 and the cover 6 in a broken-away view.

[0049] One can pull out and easily detach the optical module 10 from between the side guides 5c and the bottom guide 5d of the receptacle 5 by removing the cover 6 through the reverse steps to the above-described assembling steps while widening the two side plates 6b. At this time, the slits 6d formed in the side plates 6b of the cover 6 can allow the side plates 6b to be easily widened.

[0050] As apparent from the above, like the receptacle 1, the receptacle 5 of the receptacle module of this embodiment is small, is simple in structure and is easily attachable to and detachable from the optical module 10. Further, as the receptacle 5 encloses the optical module 10 with the help of the cover 6, the receptacle 5 can hold the optical module 10 more firmly than the receptacle 1 of the first embodiment.

[0051] The receptacle 1 may have an engagement claw 1h formed at the distal end of each side guide 1d in place of the recessed engagement portion 1f, as shown in Figures 9 and 10.

[0052] With the receptacle 1 designed this way, when the optical module 10 is inserted into the space formed by the top plate 1c, the side guides 1d and the bottom guide 1e of the receptacle 1, the engagement claws 1h formed on the side guides 1d are pressed widened by the side faces of the optical module 10. When the insertion of the optical module 10 is completed, the engagement claws 1h of the receptacle 1 engage with the rear end portion of the optical module 10, as shown in Figure 10, thus holding the optical module 10 more firmly.

[0053] According to the receptacle module of this invention which is constructed in the above-described manner, the optical module 10 is inserted into the receptacle 1 or the receptacle 5 beforehand, and is then mounted on a printed wiring board.

[0054] As the receptacle module of this invention can

ensure easy attachment and detachment of the optical module, however, it is possible to later insert the receptacle into the optical module which has been mounted on the printed wiring board, such as the PWB (Printed Wiring Board) beforehand or detach only the receptacle from the PWB.

[0055] With the optical module 10 mounted on a printed wiring board 20 beforehand, for example, the receptacle 5 may be inserted in the optical module 10 later and the cover 6 is put, as shown in Figure 11A. Then, the printed wiring board 20 is held between substrate covers 12 and 13, thus yielding a printed wiring board-attached receptacle module as shown in Figure 11B. Removing the substrate cover 12 and the cover 6 can allow the receptacle 5 to be easily detached from the printed wiring board 20 with the optical module 10 mounted on the printed wiring board 20.

[0056] As apparent from the above, the use of the receptacle module of this invention provides a greater modes of mounting an optical module on a printed wiring board or the like and thus increases the degree of mounting freedom.

[0057] The optical module 10 incorporates a laser diode or an IC, which becomes a heat generating source. In the mounting example shown in Figures 11A and 11B, the bottom surface of the top plate 6a of the cover 6 which has an excellent thermal conductivity contacts the optical module 10 and the top surface of the top plate 6a contacts the substrate cover 12 at the time the receptacle module is mounted on the substrate. This can allow the optical module 10 to let the heat generated from a component, such as a laser diode or an IC to efficiently escape outside via the cover 6 and the substrate cover 12. It is preferable that the substrate cover 12 is formed of a high-thermal-conductive material, such as copper or aluminum, which has an excellent thermal conductivity. This improves the heat discharging performance, favorably.

[0058] From the viewpoint of the heat discharging performance of the optical module 10, it is most preferable that the entire cover 6 is made of a material with an excellent thermal conductivity as in the second embodiment. Alternatively, only that portion of the cover 6 which contacts the optical module 10 may be formed of a material having a high thermal conductivity, such as copper or aluminum, and the other portion may be formed of a hard resin having a high moldability.

[0059] Although a recess is formed in the bottom guide of the receptacle and a protruding portion is formed on the optical module 10 in each embodiment described above, it is possible to form a protruding portion on the bottom guide and a recess in the optical module and then fit the former into the latter.

[0060] The receptacle module of this invention is not limited to the above-described embodiments, but may be modified in various other forms without departing from the scope of the invention.

INDUSTRIAL APPLICABILITIES

[0061] According to a first aspect of the invention, there is provided a receptacle module which is used at the time of connecting an optical connector and an optical module in a detachable manner, ensures easy detachable connection therebetween, permits either one of the optical module and receptacle, whichever fails, to be replaced with a new one, and has a compact and simple structure.

[0062] According to a second aspect of the invention, the receptacle module is preferable in achieving the above object because the optical module of the receptacle module is positioned by the first positioning member with respect to the widthwise direction of the receptacle.

[0063] According to a third aspect of the invention, the receptacle module is advantageous in achieving the above object because the slit makes the first positioning member of the receptacle module easier to be opened or closed in the widthwise direction.

[0064] According to a fourth aspect of the invention, the receptacle module is advantageous in achieving the above object as the receptacle module can simultaneously accomplish the positioning of the optical module by the first positioning member and the engagement of the optical module by the engagement portion.

[0065] According to a fifth aspect of the invention, the receptacle module allows the optical module to be positioned below the receptacle in the height direction by the second positioning member, this structure is advantageous in achieving the above object.

[0066] According to a sixth aspect of the invention, the structure can make the receptacle module more compact and is thus preferable in the sense of achieving the above object.

[0067] According to a seventh aspect of the invention, the structure of the receptacle module can permit the optical module to be smoothly guided in the lengthwise direction by the fitting of the guide means and the to-be-guided means, and is therefore preferable in achieving the aforementioned object.

[0068] According to a eighth aspect of the invention, the strength of engagement between the receptacle and the optical module of the receptacle module is improved by the engagement-portion mating portion. This structure is therefore advantageous in achieving the aforementioned object.

[0069] According to a ninth aspect of the invention, the receptacle module shields the optical module into the receptacle using the cover, the optical module can be held more surely than the receptacle. This is advantageous in achieving the aforementioned object.

[0070] According to a tenth aspect of the invention, the slits permit the side plates of the cover to be easily opened and closed in the widthwise direction. This makes it easier to remove the cover from the main body of the receptacle, which is preferable in achieving the

aforementioned object.

[0071] According to a eleventh aspect of the invention, the structure can permit the receptacle module to efficiently discharge the heat, generated in the optical module, outside. This feature is preferable in maintaining the performance of the optical module.

[0072] According to a twelfth aspect of the invention, the structure of the receptacle module can allow the optical module to be positioned precisely with respect to the receptacle. At the time the optical module is connected to the optical connector, therefore, high-precision optical coupling can be realized, thus contributing to an improvement of the performance.

Claims

1. A receptacle module comprising an optical module having a photoelectric converting capability and a receptacle to be used for connecting said optical module to an optical connector,
said receptacle having a positioning portion for positioning said optical module and an engagement portion for detachably holding said optical module by engagement.
2. The receptacle module according to claim 1, wherein said positioning portion has a first positioning member for positioning said optical module, said first positioning member extending from both widthwise-directional sides of said receptacle along a direction of connection between said optical connector and said optical module.
3. The receptacle module according to claim 2, wherein said first positioning member is provided as part of a side portion of said receptacle and is partly separated from a main body of said receptacle by a slit provided along an attaching and detaching direction of said optical module.
4. The receptacle module according to claim 2, wherein said engagement portion is formed on said first positioning member.
5. The receptacle module according to claim 2, wherein said positioning portion has a second positioning member extending from a bottom portion of a main body of said receptacle and said optical module is positioned between said first and second positioning members.
6. The receptacle module according to claim 4 (sic), wherein said second positioning member is formed narrower than a width of said receptacle.
7. The receptacle module according to claim 1, wherein said positioning portion is provided with guide

means along an attaching and detaching direction of said optical module and said optical module is provided with to-be-guided means to be fitted in said guide means.

5

8. The receptacle module according to claim 1, wherein said optical module is provided with an engagement-portion mating portion for engaging with said engagement portion.

10

9. The receptacle module according to claim 5, further including a cover to be engaged with said receptacle, which cover comprises side plates for covering said first positioning member from both widthwise-directional sides, a top plate for covering a top portion of said first positioning member, and a rear plate for covering a distal end portion of said first positioning member; and

15

with said optical module held between said first and second positioning members, said first positioning member and said optical module are covered with said cover, and with said cover engaged with said receptacle, said optical module is held positioned to said receptacle.

20

25

10. The receptacle module according to claim 9, wherein said side plates have slits formed in a height direction.

11. The receptacle module according to claim 9, wherein a heat discharging portion of a thermal conductive material is provided on at least part of said cover and said heat discharging portion and said optical module are secured in contact with each other.

30

35

12. The receptacle module according to claim 1, wherein said optical module has a protruding portion having an end face to be optically coupled to said optical connector; and

said receptacle has a positioning member, as said positioning portion, for positioning said optical module and an inserting portion formed inside, which is to be fitted over said protruding portion, and said receptacle and said optical module are positioned by said positioning member and said optical module and are positioned more accurately by said protruding portion fitted into said inserting portion.

40

45

50

55

FIG. 1

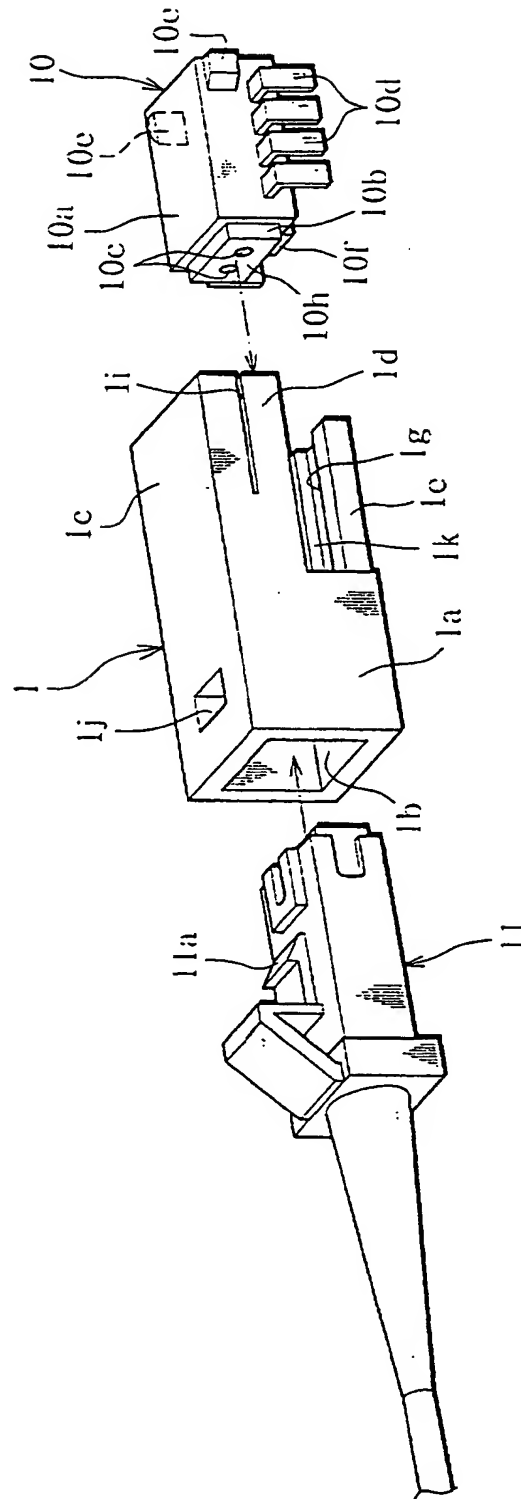


FIG. 2

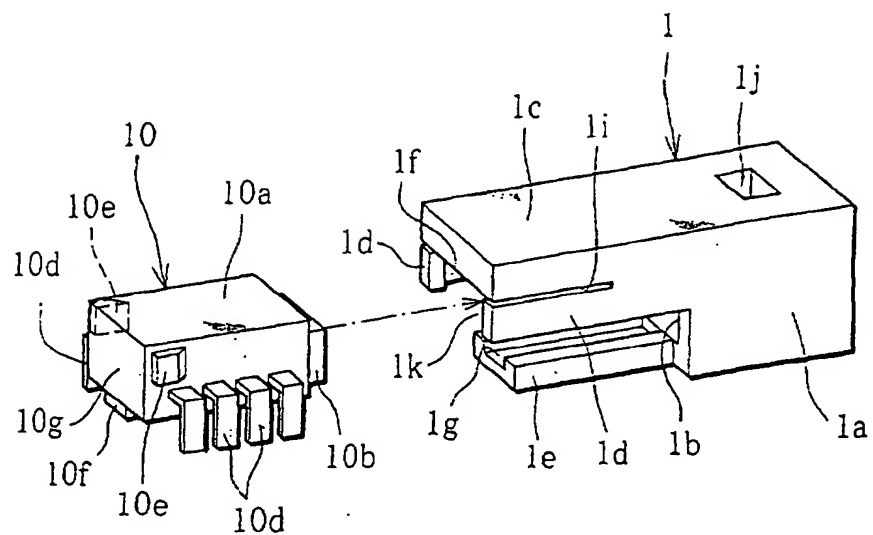


FIG. 3A

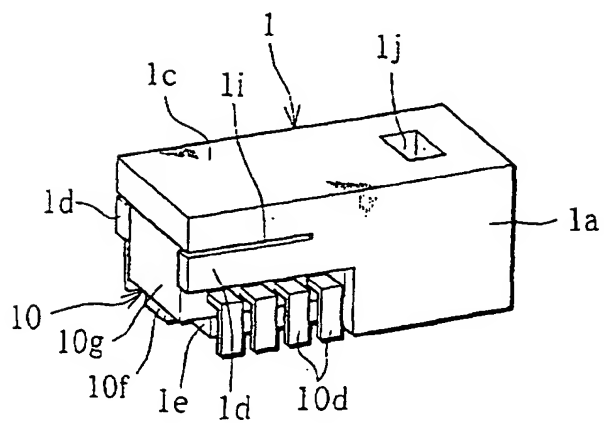


FIG. 3B

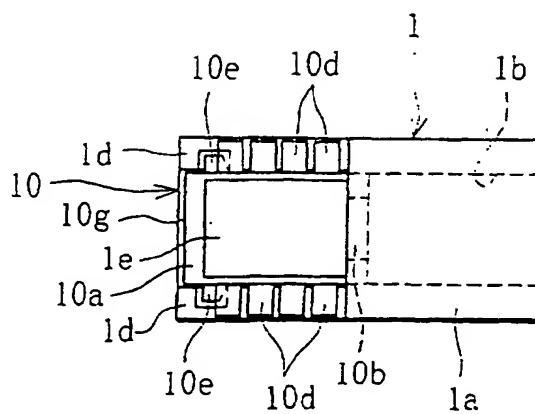


FIG. 4

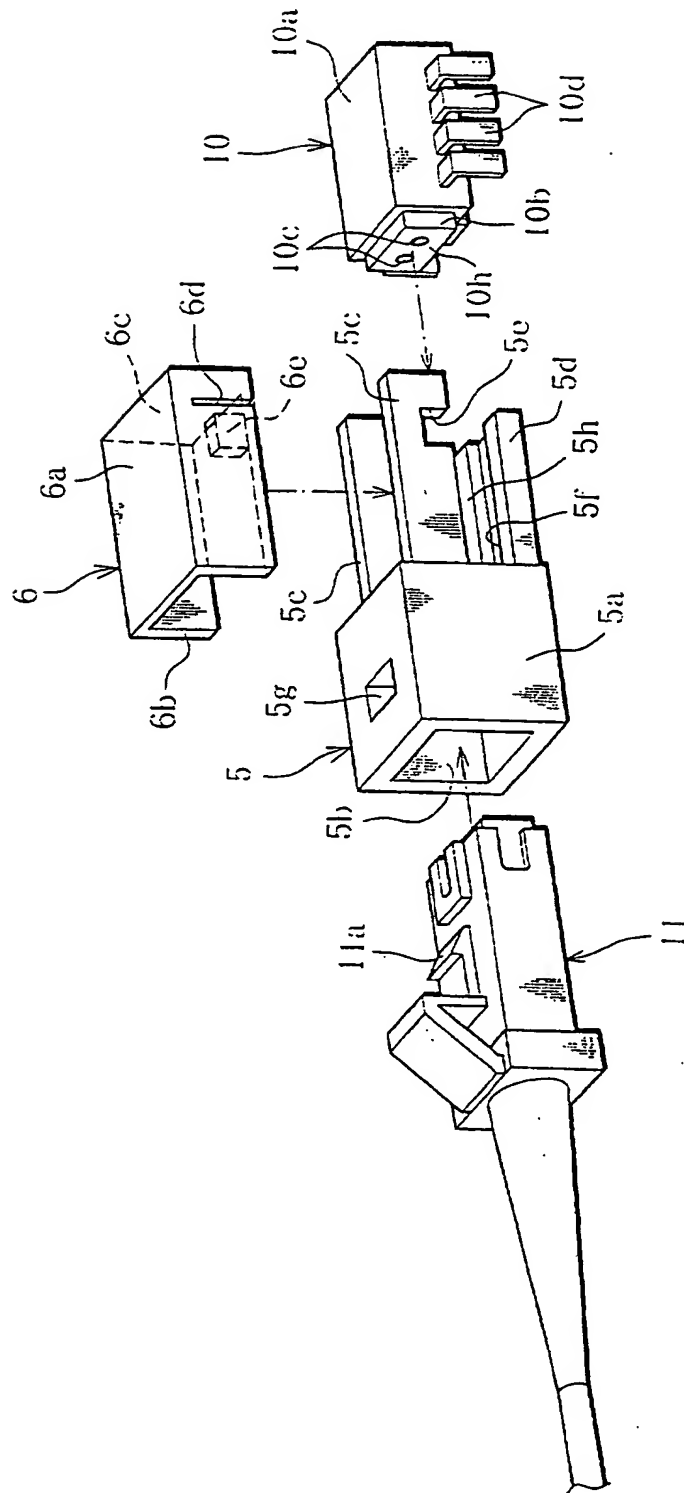


FIG. 5

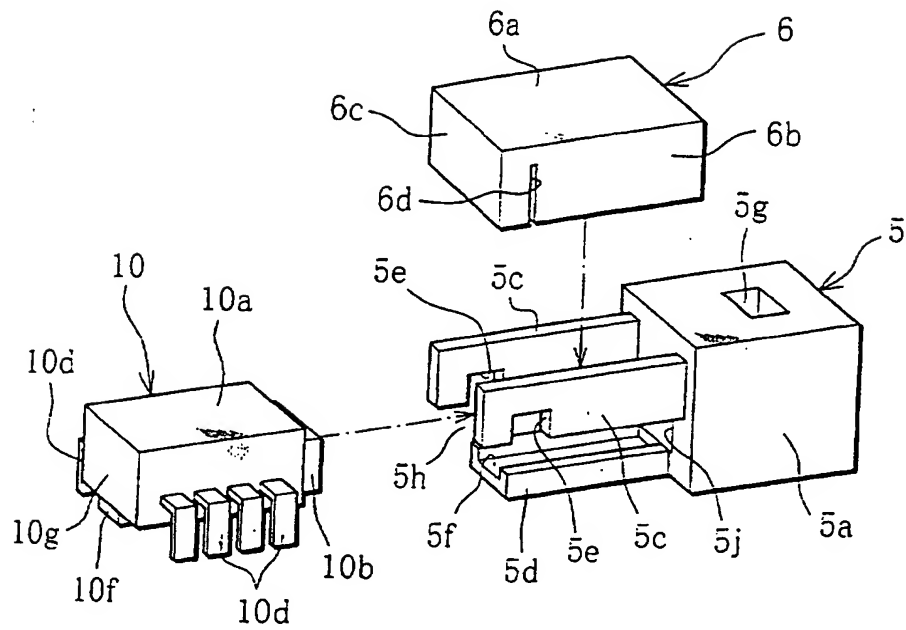


FIG. 6

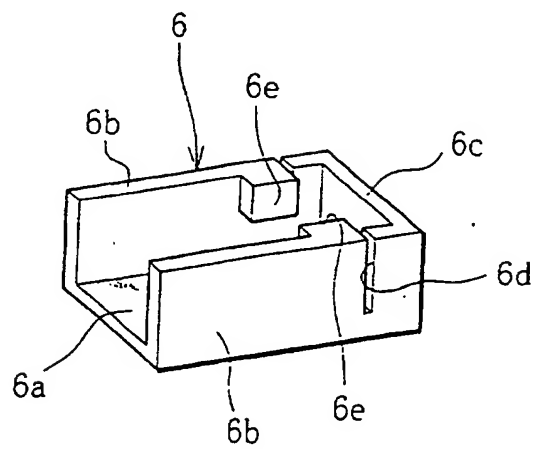


FIG. 7A

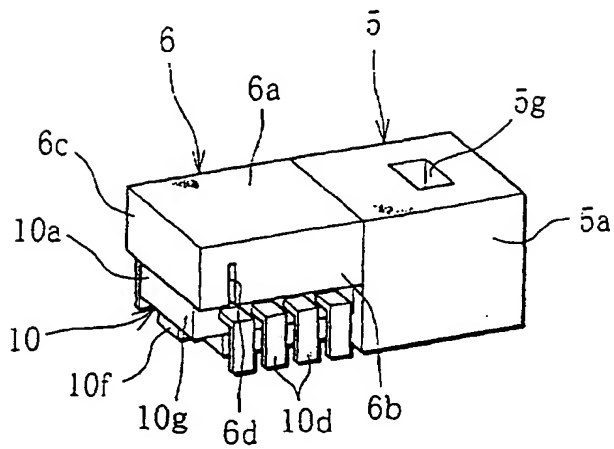


FIG. 7B

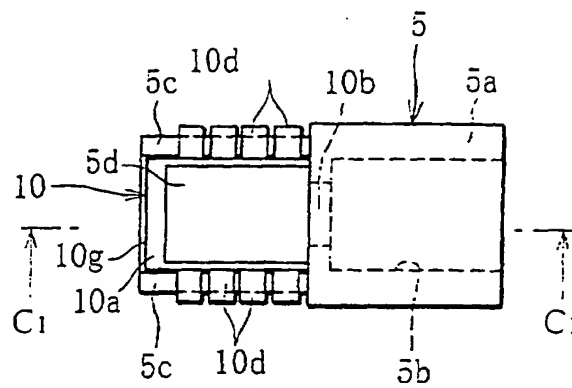


FIG. 8

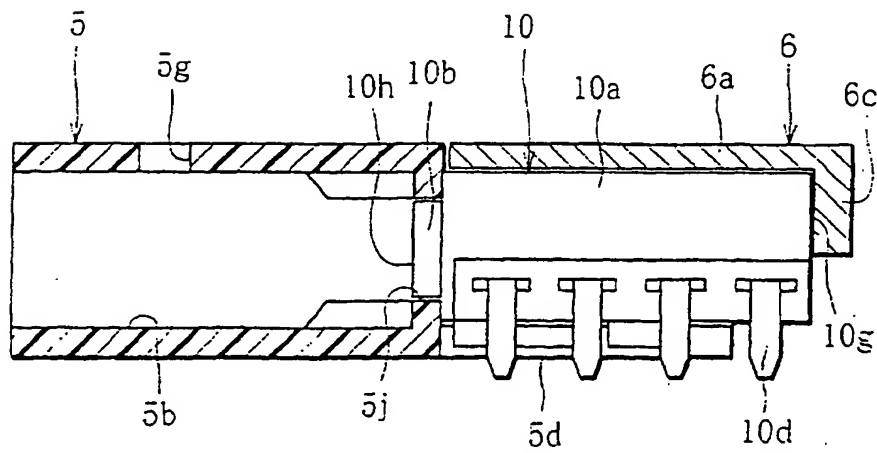


FIG. 9

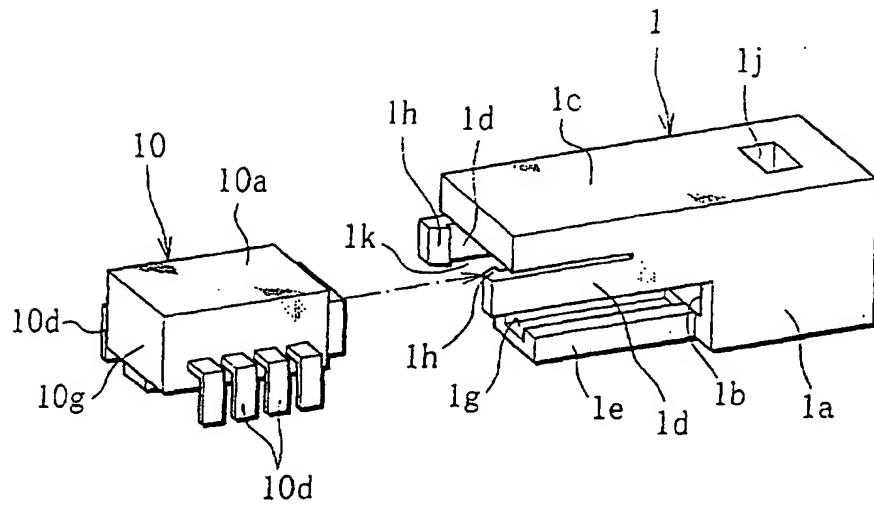


FIG. 10

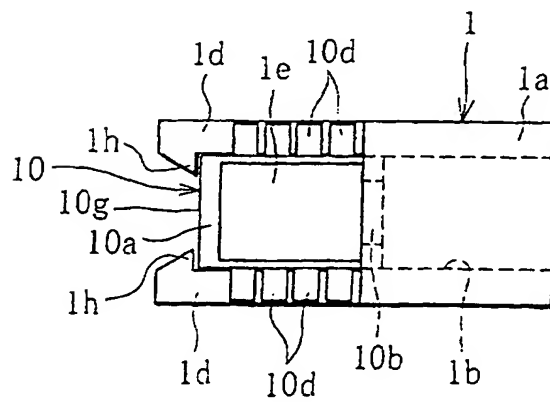


FIG. 11A

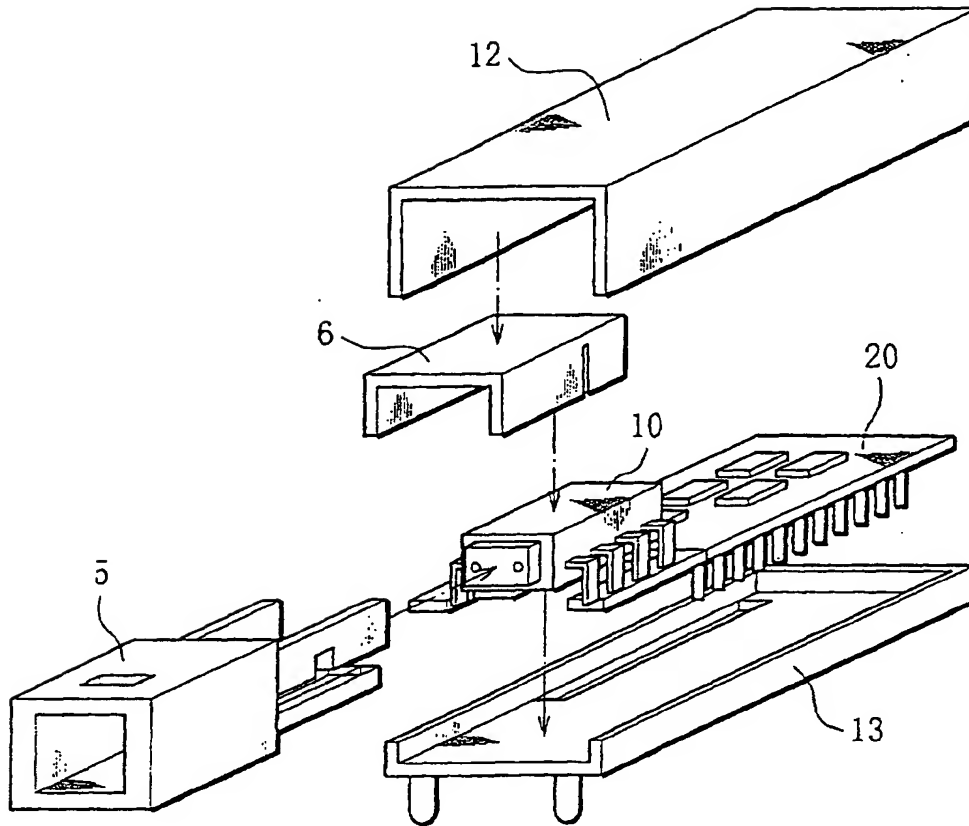
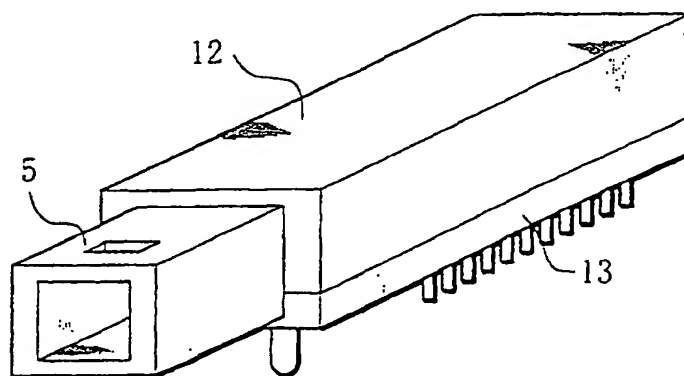


FIG. 11B



INTERNATIONAL SEARCH REPORT

International application No.

PCT/JP00/04813

A. CLASSIFICATION OF SUBJECT MATTER Int.Cl. ⁷ G02B6/42		
According to International Patent Classification (IPC) or to both national classification and IPC		
B. FIELDS SEARCHED		
Minimum documentation searched (classification system followed by classification symbols) Int.Cl. ⁷ G02B6/36, 6/38, 6/42		
Documentation searched other than minimum documentation to the extent that such documents are included in the fields searched Jitsuyo Shinan Koho 1922-1996 Toroku Jitsuyo Shinan Koho 1994-2000 Kokai Jitsuyo Shinan Koho 1971-2000 Jitsuyo Shinan Toroku Koho 1996-2000		
Electronic data base consulted during the international search (name of data base and, where practicable, search terms used)		
C. DOCUMENTS CONSIDERED TO BE RELEVANT		
Category*	Citation of document, with indication, where appropriate, of the relevant passages	Relevant to claim No.
X Y	GB, 2239104, A (Kel Corporation), 19 June, 1991 (19.06.91), page 19, line 21 to page 24, line 24; Fig. 18-27F & JP, 3-167510, A & US, 5390270, A	1-10, 12 11
X Y	Microfilm of the specification and drawings annexed to the request of Japanese Utility Model Application No.12255/1990 (Laid-open No.102750/1991) (Sharp Corporation), 25 October, 1991 (25.10.91), page 17, line 11 to page 23, line 5; Figs.7-12(c) (Family: none)	1-10, 12 11
X	JP, 7-209553, A (Hitachi, Ltd.), 11 August, 1995 (11.08.95), Full text; Figs. 1 to 4 (Family: none)	1, 8, 12
Y	CD-ROM of the specification and drawings annexed to the request of Japanese Utility Model Application No.106035/1991 (Laid-open No.48365/1993) (The Furukawa Electric Co., Ltd.), 25 June, 1993 (25.06.93), Full text; Figs. 1 to 6 (Family: none)	11
<input type="checkbox"/> Further documents are listed in the continuation of Box C. <input type="checkbox"/> See patent family annex.		
* Special categories of cited documents: "A" document defining the general state of the art which is not considered to be of particular relevance "E" earlier document but published on or after the international filing date "L" document which may throw doubts on priority claim(s) or which is cited to establish the publication date of another citation or other special reason (as specified) "O" document referring to an oral disclosure, use, exhibition or other means "P" document published prior to the international filing date but later than the priority date claimed "T" later document published after the international filing date or priority date and not in conflict with the application but cited to understand the principle or theory underlying the invention "X" document of particular relevance; the claimed invention cannot be considered novel or cannot be considered to involve an inventive step when the document is taken alone "Y" document of particular relevance; the claimed invention cannot be considered to involve an inventive step when the document is combined with one or more other such documents, such combination being obvious to a person skilled in the art "&" document member of the same patent family		
Date of the actual completion of the international search 06 October, 2000 (06.10.00)		Date of mailing of the international search report 24 October, 2000 (24.10.00)
Name and mailing address of the ISA/ Japanese Patent Office		Authorized officer
Facsimile No.		Telephone No.

Form PCT/ISA/210 (second sheet) (July 1992)